

**REMARKS**

The rejections presented in the Office Action dated December 20, 2006 have been considered. Claims 7, 8, 12, 14 – 17, 19, 31, 32, 38, 44, 47, 49, and 56 have been amended. Claims 1 – 6, 11, 18, 20 – 30, 45, 46, 48, 50 – 55 have been canceled. Reconsideration of the pending claims and allowance of the application in view of the present response is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-10, 12-15, 31-34, 38, 44, 47, 49 and 56 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 7-10, 12-15, 31-34, 38, 44, 47, 49 and 56.

Claims 1-6, 11, 16-30, 35-37, 39-43, 45-46, 48, 50-54 and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,091,406 to Kambara et al. (hereinafter “Kambara”).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner’s characterization of Kambara and the contention that Kambara anticipates these claims. However, to expedite allowance of this application, claims 1 – 6, 11, 18, 20 – 30, 45, 46, 48, 50 – 55 have been canceled. Allowable claims 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 31, 32, 38, 44, 47, 49, and 56 have been amended to recite the limitations of their respective base claims. Claims 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 19, and 34 depend from claims 8, 12, 15, or 32, respectively.

Claims 7 – 10, 12 – 17, 19, 31 – 34, 38, 44, 47, 49, and 56 are now in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes it necessary or helpful, the undersigned attorney of record invites the Examiner to contact him to discuss any issues related to this case.

Fees

- ☒ Please charge any additional fees associated with the prosecution of this application to Deposit Account No. 13-3723. This authorization includes the fee for any necessary extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136(a). To the extent any such extension should become necessary, it is hereby requested.
- ☒ Please credit any overpayment to the same deposit account.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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